



### *Common Short-term Reactions*

- Preoccupation with the crime.
- High anxiety.
- May or may not look distressed.
- Disturbed concentration and difficulty performing simple mental tasks.
- Concerns about safety.

### *Common Short-term Reactions (cont.)*

- Sleep disturbances.
- Concerns about who to tell.
- Concerns about being believed.
- Concerns about not being blamed.

### *Long-term Reactions: PTSD*

#### ➤ **Diagnostic Criterion A:**

The person has been exposed to a traumatic event in which both of the following were present:

### *PTSD: Diagnostic Criterion A*

- The person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others
- The person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror (in children this may be expressed instead by disorganized or agitated behavior)

### *PTSD*

#### ➤ **Diagnostic Criterion B:**

Reexperiencing symptoms

(Need at least one)

### *PTSD: Diagnostic Criterion B*

- Recurrent or intrusive thoughts or recollections about the event(s)
- Recurrent nightmares about the event(s)
- Suddenly reliving the events(s), flashbacks of it, acting or feeling as if it were reoccurring
- Intense *emotional* upset when reminded of the event(s)
- Intense *physical* reactions (e.g., sweaty, heart palpitations) when reminded of event(s)

## ***PTSD***

- **Diagnostic Criterion C: avoidance and numbing symptoms (need *at least three*)**

## ***PTSD: Diagnostic Criterion C***

- Persistent efforts to avoid thoughts or feelings associated with the event(s)
- Persistent efforts to avoid activities, situations, or places that are reminders of the event(s)
- Inability to recall important aspects about the event(s)

## ***PTSD: Diagnostic Criterion C***

- Markedly lost interest in significant activities since the event(s)
- Feelings of detachment or estrangement from others since the event(s)
- Restricted range of affect
- Sense of foreshortened future (e.g., no career, marriage, children or long life)

## ***PTSD***

### ➤ **Diagnostic Criterion D:**

**Arousal symptoms**

**(need at least two)**

## ***PTSD: Diagnostic Criterion D***

- Persistent difficulty falling or staying asleep
- Irritability or having outbursts of anger
- Difficulty concentrating
- Hypervigilance
- Exaggerated startle response

## ***PTSD***

### ➤ **Diagnostic Criterion E:**

**Duration of the disturbance (symptoms in Criteria B, C, D) is more than 1 month**



## ***PTSD***

- **Diagnostic Criterion F: The disturbance causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.**

## ***Other Long-term Psychological Responses***

- Major depression.
- Panic disorders.
- Thoughts of suicide and suicide attempts.
- Alcohol and other drug abuse.
- Anxiety disorders.
- Problems with relationships.
- Changing view of the world:
  - As a “safe place.”
  - Trust issues.
  - Seeking justice.

## ***Major Types of Crime- related Psychological Trauma***

- Problems with relationships
- Changes in lifestyle and restrictions in behavior
- Changes in pre-crime beliefs and attributions about the world
- Increased risk of future victimization

## ***Health Effects of Trauma***

- Physical injuries may lead to other health conditions.
- Acute health problems such as STDs might develop into chronic problems.
- Assault-related stress might impair functioning.
- Stress and/or emotional problems might increase unhealthy behaviors.
- Victims might receive inappropriate health care resulting in additional health care needs.

## ***Interventions***

- General issues about effectiveness and safety.
- Psychological debriefing.
- Crime victims' expectations regarding mental health counseling.

## ***Major Types of Mental Health Professionals***

- Psychiatrists
- Clinical Psychologists
- Clinical Social Workers
- Marriage and Family Therapists
- Masters degree clinical mental health counselors
- Others (pastoral counselors, traditional Native American healers)

### *Types of Crime Victims Most Likely to Need Mental Health Counseling*

#### *Previctimization Factors:*

- No consistent finding with respect to demographic characteristics
- Prior victimization history increases trauma following a new crime
- History of prior mental health problems increases trauma following a new crime, particularly history of PTSD or major depression

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### *Types of Crime Victims Most Likely to Need Mental Health Counseling*

#### ➤ *Crime Factors:*

- Life threat and injury increases risk
- Violent crimes vs. property crimes

#### ➤ *Postvictimization Factors:*

- Poor social support
- Degree of exposure to CJS

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### *Resilience*

- The majority of people exposed to major stressors, including violent crime, do not develop PTSD or other major problems.
- Resilience is defined as “maintaining one’s level of psychological and behavioral functioning after exposure to major psychological stressors.”
- *New research:* resilience is a function of an interaction between genetic characteristics, environmental stress and social support.

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